

[illegible]

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory (Public)

FORM 2

Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

Area Unique Identifier CDCA 1334A-1 Acreage 20,517

(If the inventory area consists of subunits, list the acreage of each and evaluate separately).

In completing steps (1) – (5), use additional space as necessary.

(1) Is the area of sufficient size? (If the area meets one of the exceptions to the size criterion, check "Yes" and describe the exception in the space provided below),

Yes X No

Note: If "No is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "N/A" for the remaining questions below.

Description (describe the boundaries of the area—wilderness inventory roads, property lines, etc.):

The northern and western boundaries of this unit are contiguous with Joshua Tree National Park. The eastern boundary is a dirt maintained road. The southern boundary consists of a mining road. The unit contains Private and Public (NPS, BLM) Lands with Northern and Eastern Colorado (NECO) designated routes and primitive ways.

(2) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes X No N/A

Note: If "No is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "N/A" for the remaining questions below.

Description (include land ownership, location, topography, vegetation, and summary of major human uses/activities):

The area is characterized by boulders and rugged mountains dissected by numerous small canyons. A small portion of the relatively flat to rolling Pinto Basin is within the western portion and contains scattered creosote. The western 1/3 of the area is affected primarily by the forces of nature where the imprint of man's work is substantially unnoticeable. In contrast, the eastern 2/3 is heavily impacted by extensive open pit mining scars. Numerous tunnels, shafts, and tailings lace this area, thus altering the natural appearance of the landscape. Roads to "satellite" mining and exploration areas radiate north and westward from the Eagle Mountain Mine, degrading the natural character of the mountains up to the ridgelines where the border of Joshua Tree National Park is located. With the NECO designated routes and a few primitive ways, the western half is excluded for the lack of contiguous roadless area. The southeastern portion, which is mainly Private Lands, has also been excluded. In the northeastern half of this unit, 2,560 acres in T3S, R14E, sec. 21, 22, 23, and 24 appear to be natural free of structures and roads and are adjacent to Joshua Tree National Park Wilderness.

(3) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remaining is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes X No N/A

Description (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for solitude):

The ruggedness and diversity of terrain, which tends to screen visitors from one another, as well as being adjacent to Joshua Tree National Park wilderness, all tend to create outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

(4) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remaining is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?

Yes X No N/A

Note: If "No" is checked for both 3 and 4, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "N/A" for question 5.

Description (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation):

The ruggedness and diversity of terrain, which tends to screen visitors from one another, as well as being adjacent to Joshua Tree National Park wilderness, all tend to create outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

(5) Does the area have supplemental values (ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value)?

Yes No N/A X

Description:

(Add description here)

Summary of Analysis*

Area Unique Identifier: CDCA 1334A-1

Summary

The area is characterized by boulders and rugged mountains dissected by numerous small canyons. A small portion of the relatively flat to rolling Pinto Basin is within the western portion and contains scattered creosote. The western 1/3 of the area is affected primarily by the forces of nature where the imprint of man's work is substantially unnoticeable. In contrast, the eastern 2/3 is heavily impacted by extensive open pit mining scars. Numerous tunnels, shafts, and tailings lace this area, thus altering the natural appearance of the landscape. Roads to "satellite" mining and exploration areas radiate north and westward from the Eagle Mountain Mine, degrading the natural character of the mountains up to the ridgelines where the border of Joshua Tree National Park is located. With the NECO designated routes and a few primitive ways, the western half is excluded for the lack of contiguous roadless area. The southeastern portion, which is mainly Private Lands, has also been excluded. In the northeastern half of this unit, 2,560 acres in T3S, R14E, sec. 21, 22, 23, and 24 appear to be natural free of structures and roads and are adjacent to Joshua Tree National Park Wilderness. The ruggedness and diversity of terrain, which tends to screen visitors from one another, as well as being adjacent to Joshua Tree National Park wilderness, all tend to create outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Results of analysis:

1. Does the area meet any of the size requirements? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Does the area appear to be natural? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation?
☒ Yes ☐ No
4. Does the area have supplemental values? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Check one:

☒ The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as Land with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC)

☐ The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Prepared by (team members):

John Johnson, ECFO - Environmental Protection Specialist, 6/11/2014

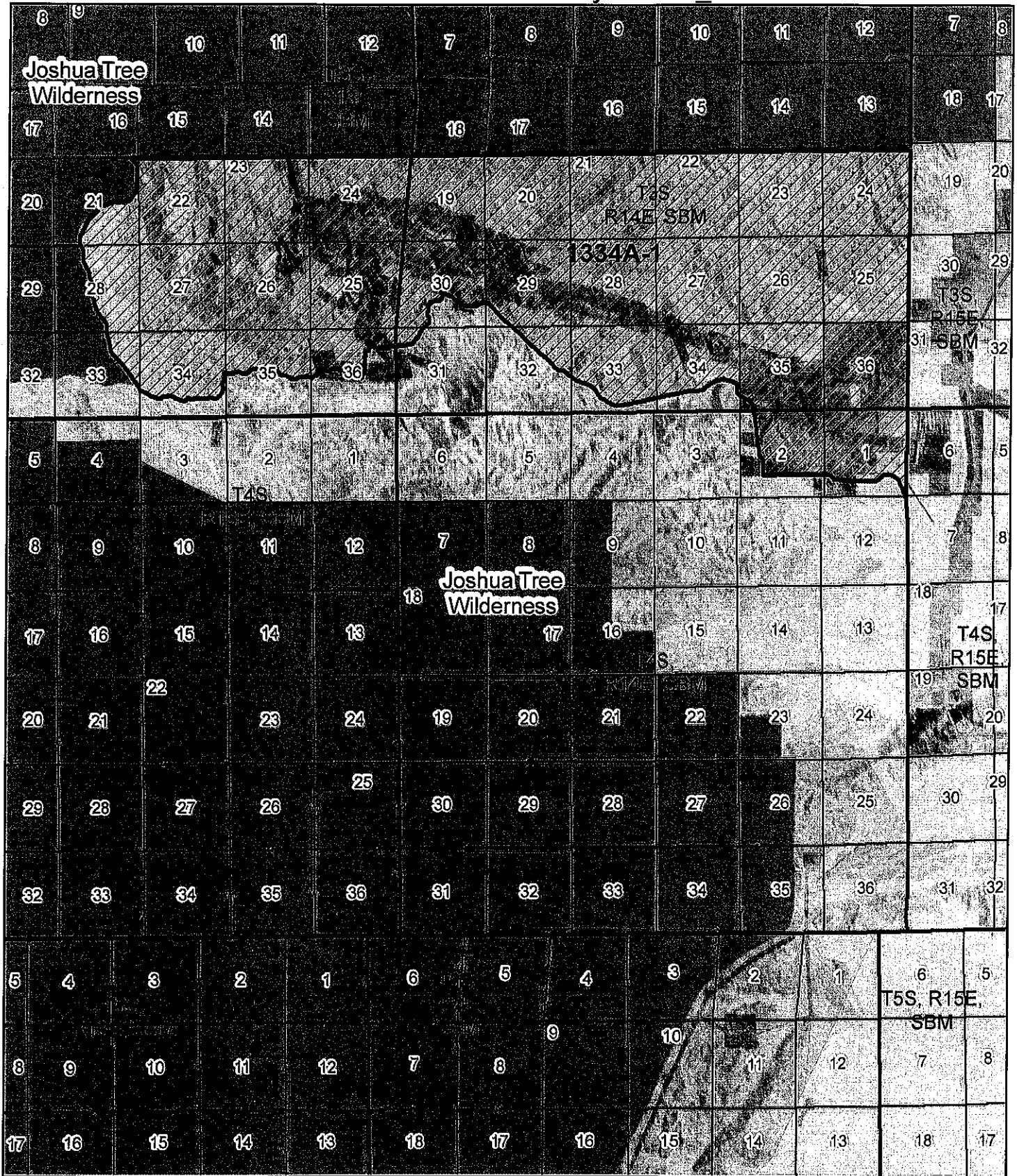
Reviewed by (District or Field Manager):

Name: John Johnson Title: Field Manager

Date: 2/9/16

*This form documents information that constitutes and inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR or 1610.5-3

Wilderness Character Inventory CDCA 1334A-1



Legend

Wilderness Inventory Units

Federal Wilderness Surface Management

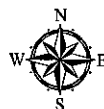
Managing Agency

- Bureau of Land Management
- US Forest Service
- National Park Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service

Government Lands

AGENCY

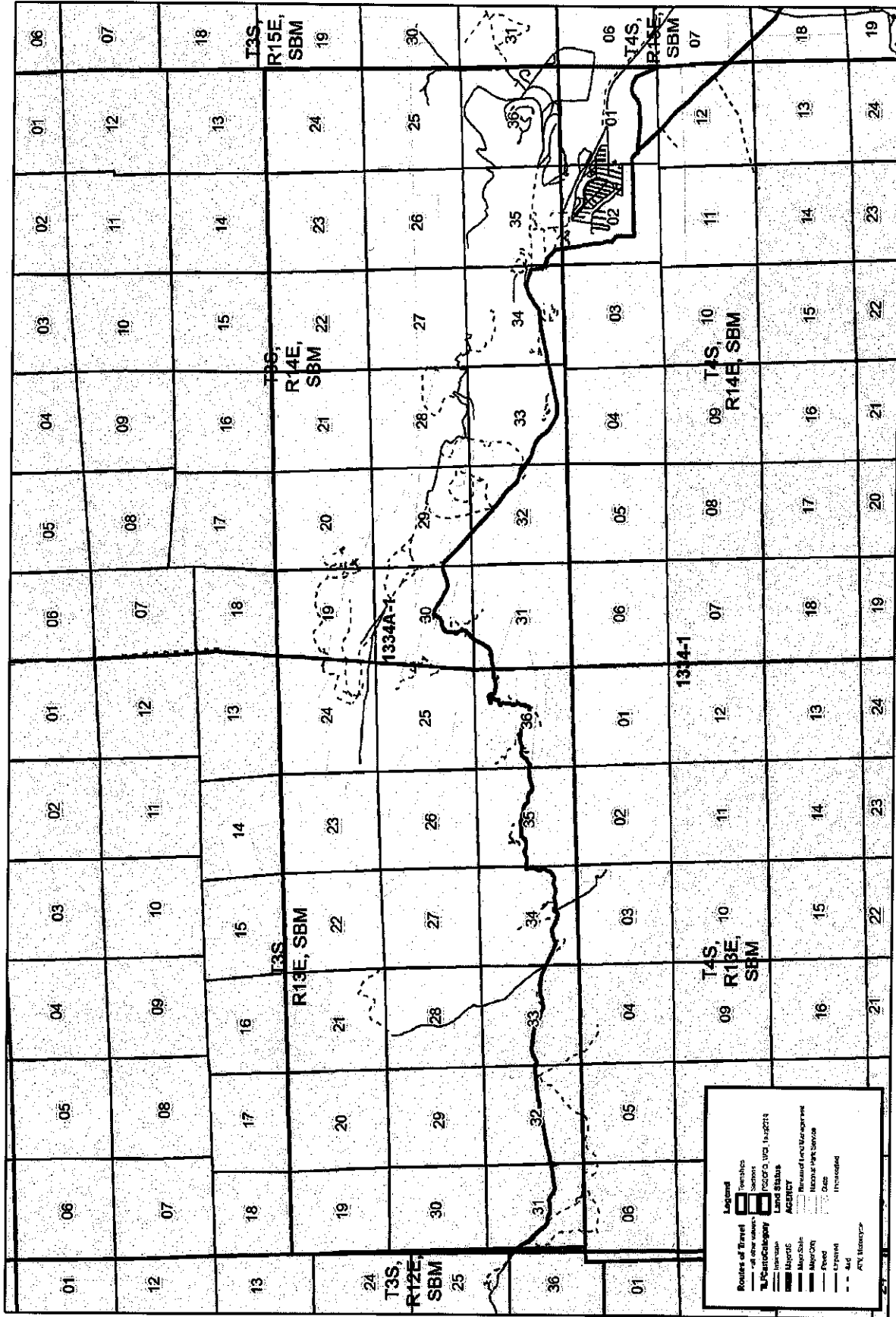
- Bureau of Land Management
- Forest Service
- National Park Service
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Department of Defense
- Other Federal
- State
- Local Government



0 1.25 2.5 Miles

1:97,612

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 Date Prepared: 1/21/2016
 Project: CDCA_1334A-1



Wilderness Character Inventory - CDCA_1334A-1



regarding roads and mining activity. Other comments opposed to inclusion were too general in nature to field validate.

AREA 334A

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The northern and western boundaries of this roadless area are contiguous with the Joshua Tree National Monument. The eastern boundary is a dirt maintained road. The southern boundary consists of a mining road.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

Approximately 30 percent of the area is in non-public land forming a slender irregular shape near the middle. The western third is completely in public land.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

This area is characterized by boulders and rugged mountains dissected by numerous small canyons. A small portion of the relatively flat to rolling Pinto Basin is within the western portion and contains scattered creosote.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

The western one-third of the area is affected primarily by the forces of nature where the imprint of man's work is substantially unnoticeable. In contrast, the eastern two-thirds is heavily impacted by extensive open pit mining scars. Numerous tunnels, shafts, and tailings lace this area, thus altering the natural appearance of the landscape. Roads to "satellite" mining and exploration areas radiate north and westward from the Eagle Mountain Mine, degrading the natural character of the mountains up to the ridgelines where the border of Joshua Tree National Monument is located. The eastern boundary of the resulting potential study area has been adjusted westward to the first ridgeline of the mountains, near the Cactus Mine.

V. OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE OR A PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED TYPE OF RECREATION

The ruggedness and diversity of terrain, which tends to screen visitors from one another, as well as adjacency to Joshua Tree National Monument wilderness, all tend to create outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

A few comments were received supporting the inclusion of the west portion of the area for further wilderness study. The comments also urged the addition of portions of the mountains between Joshua Tree National Monument and the Eagle Mountain Mine. However, mining activities affect the natural character up to the ridgeline, which coincides with the Monument border. Mining interests expressed concern that future expansion of current mining operations would be restricted by wilderness study designation. This concern is not an inventory factor.

AREA 335

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The area is bounded to the north by State Highway 62; to the east, by the graded Gold Crown Road; and, to the south and west, by Joshua Tree National Monument and a short segment of a paved road leading into the Monument from Twentynine Palms.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

Public lands predominate. Non-public sections occur in a widely scattered pattern and account for approximately 10 percent of the total area.